

# CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

Flowers grow at the Shenandoah landfill, creating habitat for pollinators. A similar project is sprouting at Fairfax County's I-66 Landfill and Transfer Station on West Ox Road.

OPINION, PAGE 6 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 13 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14

PHOTO BY ELISE TRISSEL FOR SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS



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PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID HUXSOLL

From left, Dave Cook, Larry McKinley and Jeff Thomas, all of the Fairfax Resolves Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, give a presentation to students at Bull Run Elementary.

## Constitution Day Celebrated at Local Schools

Members of the Fairfax Resolves Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution celebrated Constitution Day, on Sept. 19, by presenting a program on the U.S. Constitution to students at Bull Run Elementary in Centerville, Greenbriar East Elementary in Chantilly, and White Oaks Elementary in Burke. Most of the students were from the schools' fourth-grade classes, but some fifth- and sixth-grade students also attended.

The program began with a discussion of the Constitution and how it created the three branches of the government, plus the rules for that government's conduct. The program then evolved to a discussion of some of the states that ratified the Constitution.

A discussion of some of the founding fathers followed. The students seemed most interested and even animated at the mention of Alexander Hamilton's name. The program ended with a discussion of the Bill of Rights and some of the more important amendments. The latter included a discussion of the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery, and the 19th Amendment which granted women the right to vote.

The response from the teachers and students was very positive. A recording of the presentation held at Bull Run Elementary School is available on the VASSAR YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/yMRW03Xha2o>.

— DAVID HUXSOLL

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# NEWS

## City Council Candidates in their Own Words

Nine people vying for six seats in Fairfax.

The Fairfax Connection asked the nine candidates for Fairfax City Council to briefly state their qualifications, explain their top priorities for the City and tell why residents should vote for them. Below, in alphabetical order and in their own words, are their responses.

### Billy Bates

I'm currently a student at George Mason University, studying computational physics, and previously served a year on the City's Environmental Sustainability Committee as the high-school liaison. I would offer a unique perspective as the only Councilmember with a background in STEM and the youngest Fairfax City elected official in history.



Billy Bates

I support more efficient use of our limited amount of developed land, greater walkability, more affordable housing, and including permitted events along with parks and City facilities under the gun ban, as well as increasing the penalty for a violation to a class 1 misdemeanor, consistent with Fairfax County and several nearby jurisdictions.

I believe in being entirely up front with my fellow residents and speaking out against unfairness; and as such, I have this race's most comprehensive and progressive platform, which is available on my website, [batesforfairfax.com](http://batesforfairfax.com).

### Kate Doyle Feingold

I've lived in the City for almost 10 years and have two daughters who attend City public schools. I'm an experienced problem solver, leader and critical thinker. In my professional life, I've written ordinances and policies, studied evidence-based ways to lower crime, worked on issues involving zoning laws and policing best practices, and worked to predict and resolve future problems.



Kate Doyle Feingold

In the City, I've volunteered for A Place to Stand – a wonderful organization started by a City resident. I volunteer regularly for the PTA at Daniels Run Elementary. I also serve as a board member for the preschool at Fairfax United Methodist Church.

My top priorities are protecting our environment and natural resources, supporting our local businesses, and working to help residents have more information about de-

terminations being made, while ensuring that residents' opinions and needs are prioritized.

### Jeff Greenfield

Experience matters. As a lifelong City resident with demonstrated leadership on the Council (a total of 12, two-year terms), I will provide the necessary proven governance to make the tough decisions to keep our City moving forward.

The next Council must strike a balance – providing top-notch services while maintaining fiscal discipline and a reasonable tax rate. Fiscal management, economic development, education, and transportation will require continued focus over the next few years. I will work with staff and the Council to provide accountability, fiscal responsibility, and dependable leadership. To learn more about the issues, please visit my campaign at [jefgreenfield.org](http://jefgreenfield.org).



Jeff Greenfield

### Joe Harmon

I am passionate about making our City a better place for our children and our future. We can look toward the future without negatively impacting our sense of inclusive, neighborly, small-town charm.

As a member of the City Council, I have tried hard to balance competing interests. When a developer applies for a project, I first and foremost listen to what the residents of the impacted neighborhood want. I then look at what our Fairfax City Comprehensive Plan outlines. After reviewing all sides of the issue, I come to a well-informed and balanced decision on all Council actions.

I don't think I know better than you and your neighbors. My goal is to listen before making a decision. I will continue to work to build livable home neighborhoods, a thriving city economy and vibrant places to work, shop, and play.



Joe Harmon

### So Lim

Fairfax City is where I raised my family, my children received a world-class education, and I operated a successful insurance agency for the past 22 years. I hope to repay this community's sup-



So Lim

port by serving it. I'm on GMU's School of the Arts and Korea boards, and it's been an honor and a privilege being on City Council since 2018.

I'm seeking re-election to continue making our City a great place to live, work and play by promoting small-business growth, emphasizing smart growth and appropriate land use, ensuring affordable and diverse housing options, and making our neighborhoods safer and pedestrian-friendly, while being environmentally conscious for our next generation.

I'll continue listening to all City residents, learning every side of an issue, and rolling up my sleeves to tackle all challenges. I've found common-sense approaches to problem solving are best. That's what I promise to do for you and the City.

### Ana Renner

I'm a mom, foster mom, and wife of a Marine veteran. We immigrated when I was 6. Within a year, my mom was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. I advocated for her until she passed away. Most of my earlier professional career was working for nonprofits.

I'm concerned we'll lose our small-town charm and neighborly way with rapid development, which doesn't appear to take current residents' concerns into account. I'm asking for your vote so I can work with the next Council and City staff to:

Slow the rush to overdevelop, retain and attract new businesses, fund essential programs for children and seniors, listen to residents and include you earlier in the process, and collaborate with police and first responders to address our growing City's needs. On Nov. 8, please vote for Ana Renner for Fairfax. Website is <https://AnaForFairfax.com>.



Ana Renner

### Tom Ross

I'm seeking re-election to City Council to continue the progress we've made investing in our community. My background involves more than 40 years of community and elected experience including the Planning Commission, the City's Charter Review commission, the 2020 Commission and the City's Electoral Board.

The City's Comprehensive Plan states: "In 2035, the City of Fairfax has a strong sus-



Tom Ross

tainable economy that supports a vibrant, 21st century community." My goals, based on this Plan, are as follows:

A community with a sound economic and financial base to provide exceptional services to its residents and businesses; an exciting, vibrant community, welcoming all ages and backgrounds; one which celebrates its diversity and varied backgrounds with opportunities for all; and a City managing its growth and development in a manner that creates opportunities, but also preserves our neighborhoods and the environment.

### Craig Salewski

I first moved to Fairfax City in 1998. My wife and our three children have enjoyed living in the city for its parks, services and small-town feel. I've been a small-business owner and am currently employed as an executive with a large commercial realty trust, running a division that focuses on restoration, maintenance and development.

One of the major factors impacting the future of Fairfax City residents will be the redevelopment of our City centers and infrastructure improvements. My experience working with developers, labor unions and the U.S. Green Building Council provides me a unique perspective that can assist our City as we move forward with our Comprehensive Plan for growth. If elected, I plan to keep a balance of smart, financially responsible growth while preserving our green spaces and small-town appeal.



Craig Salewski

### Jon Stehle

The City is where my wife Steph and I chose to start our family, and we are proud that the City of Fairfax is Zoe and Cooper's hometown. I am running for reelection to continue to: ensure our community gets value for our tax dollars with top-notch services, connect with local businesses to move our economy forward, and work to maintain our City's unique community feel.

I am proud of the work we have done as a Council, and this next team will need to continue to address the physical, mental, social and economic impacts facing our community. I bring experience, commitment and an engaging approach to the City Council. I ask for your vote either before or on Nov. 8 to continue to serve you with integrity on the City Council.



Jon Stehle



# Highlights of County Government Actions in a 3-Minute Read

## Week of October 11-18, 2022.

### FY 2022 Carryover Package

Following a public hearing at the Oct. 11 meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, the board approved staff recommendations in the \$199.6 million FY 2022 Carryover Package by a 9-1 vote. It reappropriates unencumbered obligations, commitments, unexpended capital projects, and grant balances. It included funding for one-time items not included in the Adopted budget. The review recommended allocations of \$190.05 million, excluding federal stimulus funds carried forward. It left the board with a discretionary balance of \$9.56 million to consider. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/sites/budget/files/assets/documents/fy2022/carryover/fy-2022-carryover-package.pdf>

Here are the two approved uses of the \$9.56 million carryover funds.

- ❖ Restrooms at FCPS School Stadiums: \$7.5 million to support the construction of permanent restrooms at the 15 FCPS high school outdoor stadiums. The county estimates that costs per site will range from \$800,000 to \$1.2 million. Construction is a matter of equity, and there is an economic incentive. Permanent restrooms will attract more athletic competitions, thereby increasing tourism revenue. The \$7.5 million carryover funds and the School Board's agreed contribution of 50 percent of the required funds provide \$15 million for the project.

- ❖ \$2.058 million for Employment Incentives Funding: The board approved the additional funding to support establishing a comprehensive hiring incentive program for difficult-to-fill positions. This funding brings \$4.1 million to the reserve for employee recruitment and retention. On Sept. 13, the Board authorized the County Executive to grant up to \$15,000 in bonuses to new hires in difficult-to-fill positions, such as county police officers and mental health treatment personnel.

- ❖ \$15 million is funded for the Construction Escalation Reserve. Current cost estimates from professional consultants on many projects currently in design are trending approximately 20 percent higher than the previously approved budget. This is due to inflation and disruptions to global supply chains for most basic raw materials.
- ❖ \$10.7 million is to support continuing and new IT projects.
- ❖ \$6.5 million is to fund Environment Energy Initiatives supporting solar and renewable energy installations.
- ❖ \$5 million is for the Park Authority CIP Projects. The Park Authority has experienced project delays and, thus, a backlog of unsold bonds in addition to inflation and

cost escalation on existing projects. Funding helps alleviate some pressure on the bond program, among other things.

non-recurring fundings.

❖ \$25,208 million will be set aside for the pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements capital fund. Per the board's directive, new funding for County-wide pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements is targeted at \$100 million over approximately six years through FY 2027. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/walk/projects>

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cost escalation on existing projects. Funding helps alleviate some pressure on the bond program, among other things.

### Workforce Housing Actions

In a vote of 9-1, the board approved the Workforce Dwelling Unit Swap Agreement. It supports the construction of Somos at McLean Metro, the affordable multi-family development in the heart of Tysons. There will be 453 affordable rental residential units.

By a 9-1 vote, the board authorized the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority to issue a \$3 million bond to provide supplemental financing to complete the Ovation at Arrowbrook development at Innovation Station in Herndon. The bond will be repaid by the FCRHA from revenue from the project itself. There will be 274 affordable homes at Arrowbrook.

### Actions to Improve Statewide Notification Process for Arrest of School Employees

Earlier this year, Fairfax County Public Schools officials learned of the arrest and conviction of an

FCPS counselor. The school division realized that months before, an arrest notification had been sent from another county to a non-working FCPS email address with no follow-up. Once aware, the division put the individual on leave, followed by termination.

Chairman Jeffrey McKay (D) presented a Board Matter, which the board approved, to send a letter to Gov. Youngkin and Virginia Sec. of Education Aimee Guidera. The letter can be viewed on page 53 of the Oct. 11, 2022, meeting materials. It addresses how Virginia handles information sharing regarding arrests or convictions. McKay explains the need to accelerate Virginia's inclusion in Rap Back. It is the FBI alert system when someone employed in the public trust enters the criminal justice system.

McKay says he supports legislation during the 2023 General Assembly to modernize and ensure accountability. McKay asks the governor to close gaps by providing enhanced reporting guidance and procedures to law enforcement agencies and school systems around the state.



# SANG ★ YI

— M A Y O R —

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- ✓ **ADVOCATE** for City students in partnership with the School Board
- ✓ **INVEST** in a safe community by supporting law enforcement, first responders, and medical services

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# NEWS

## SoberRide for Halloween

A local nonprofit organization will make free safe rides available to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this Halloween weekend.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) the, 2022 Halloween SoberRide program will be in operation from 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 29 through 4 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 30 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period.

During this twelve-hour period, area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones, then enter the SoberRide code in the app's "Payment" tab (under the "Add Lyft Pass" option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's

2022 Halloween SoberRide promo code will be posted at 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29 on [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com).

"Halloween is of particular concern for younger drivers as 2020 NHTSA data shows that 68-percent of drunk driving deaths on U.S. roadways during the fall holiday involve drivers ages 21 to 34."

During the 2021 Halloween period, 700 (777) persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's SoberRide program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also offers its SoberRide program on St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day and the winter holidays. Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide program has provided 82,735 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

### BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

#### FREE HALLOWEEN WEEKEND

##### LYFT RIDES

Free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this Halloween weekend. Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) the, 2022 Halloween SoberRide program will be in operation from 4 p.m. on Saturday, October 29th and operate until 4 a.m. on Sunday, October 30th as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally

high-risk period. During this 12-hour period, area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones, then enter the SoberRide code in the app's "Payment" tab (under the "Add Lyft Pass" option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home.

WRAP's 2022 Halloween SoberRide promo code will be posted at 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 29 on [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com).

## REGISTER NOW!

### Saturday Evening 10/29/22



Community Event




**Date:** Saturday, October 29, 2022  
**Time:** Main Event 6:30-9:00pm  
**Where:** Burke Racquet and Swim Club  
 6001 Burke Commons Road  
 Burke, VA 22015

Play Tennis, Pickleball, Socialize or Volunteer at our Breast Cancer Charity Event, includes Silent Auction, wine tasting and 50/50 Raffle. Get involved for a good cause and meet a great group of FUN People!

### About Swing for Pink!

Come support patients in our local community through our partnership with the Inova Schar Cancer Institute. All proceeds benefit breast cancer education, screening and treatment. The Breast Care Institute at **Inova Mount Vernon Hospital** and the Joseph Viar and Bonnie Christ Cancer Center at **Inova Alexandria Hospital**

- \$30 Pre-Registration - includes social, tennis & pickleball round robins
- \$10 Reunion and Social (no racquet play)
- \$35 Round Robin Registration on day of event

- New Indoor Venue
- Tennis Round Robin
- Pickleball Round Robin
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- Silent Auction
- 50/50 Raffle
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## In Response to the Fairfax County School Board

BY FREE & ANTIRACIST MINDS

**W**e witnessed a craven display of systemic racism at the Fairfax County School Board meeting on Thursday, Oct. 20, 2022. The majority of the board did not vote for a resolution in support of antiracist and truthful teaching, and as a result, turned their backs on the many educators who practice these critical academic components each day.

The resolution was supported by: Fairfax Education Association, Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, Fairfax County Council of PTAs, Fairfax County Special Education PTA, FCPS Pride, Fairfax County NAACP, and 4 Public Education, among others.

Instead of championing the clear will of the community, two board members proposed and ultimately passed a last-minute, deeply weakened substitute resolution late on the day of their meeting, which removed any real substance from the statement. Despite two months of outreach, multiple conversations with administration and school

board members, and the support of a broad coalition of employee and community organizations, they chose a last-minute bait and switch. The substitute motion removed large sections of critical language from the original, deleting references to:

- ❖ Supporting “curricular resources to meet our students’ needs and the high expectations of our community around our historic truths, representative literature, critical thinking, and social justice”

- ❖ Acknowledging “recent events have caused many FCPS educators and school-based administrators to fear that implementing these necessary curricular improvements might lead to personal or professional harm”

- ❖ Supporting “antiracist, equity- and justice- based classroom resources and pedagogy that meet the high aspirations of each and every one of our students and of the Fairfax County community.”

The student representative, Michele Togbe, said it best: the amended resolution was “weak and hollow,” while the original language “was strong and clear.”

That testimony from the student representative, a young Black woman, did not move the majority. The testimony of their two Black colleagues on the board did not move the majority. Weeks of advocacy from across the community did not move the majority. When the chair called for a picture with community members to “celebrate” the hollowed-out substitute, no one from the audience moved to join them.

On the eve of their election year, the Fairfax County School Board majority stood alone. They chose weakness and isolation from the most important employee and community groups in Fairfax County. They chose to kowtow to a minority right-wing pushback to potential progressive movement forward. All so that they could avoid speaking some truth about historic and systemic racism; nevermind that students, teachers, parents and community members have those tough conversations every day. Being antiracist means consistently giving voice to injustice and inequities in voice and in deed and not just when it’s convenient.

FAM’s work continues, with eyes wide open. We cannot look to this school board for leadership, even when the community clearly calls for it. We are pushing ahead on our calls for change.

FAM applauds the three board members who remained steadfast and supported this community’s values last night by rejecting the amended resolution: Dr. Ricardy Anderson, Karen Keys Gamara, and Melanie Meren. FAM also thanks the organizations listed above, who helped advocate for the original resolution and opposed the unacceptable substitute.

We are saddened by last night’s outcome, but more convinced of the great need to fight for a school system that truly respects the rich diversity of our community and the values we hold dear.

*Free & Antiracist Minds is a student, parent, teacher, and community led organization with the mission to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline using antiracist, abolitionist, and community-driven approaches to promote transformative public schools.*

## Virginia’s Natural Beauty

BY DEL. KENNETH R. “KEN” PLUM

**T**he spectrum of color that makes up the fall foliage of Virginia reminds us of the beautiful state in which we live. While leaves are past their peak in color in the higher elevations of the Blue Ridge, Massanutten, and Allegheny Mountains, there remains ample opportunities to enjoy Mother Nature at her best with the range of colors that are present on the trees in our neighborhoods and in the lower elevations. Fall foliage viewing creates some traffic backups on the roads leading to the mountains—the need to drive slower just gives you more time to enjoy the trees on the fence lines in the rural areas and the seedpods of endless varieties that appear this time of the year throughout the countryside.

If you want to spend the night you are likely to have difficulty finding a place. All those people who last year found that they could not make a last-minute reservation for a place on the Skyline Drive made a reservation earlier this year. Now you can make a note to make a reservation months ahead for next year. Remember that from Northern Virginia the Shenandoah National Park is

just a couple of hours away with entrances off Route 340 and 211. Meditate or hike for a few hours, and you can still be back home before dark. If you choose to go a shorter distance, consider Sky Meadows State Park off



Plum

Route 7 west a little more than an hour. It has one of the best views of the Piedmont of Virginia, and it will be extra special with seasonal colors this time of year. Also about an hour away is the Shenandoah River State Park on Route 340 past Front Royal. It is located on the bends of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, and this is peak time for its fall foliage colors.

I have a special feeling for the Shenandoah National Park and the Skyline Drive as I lived and worked at Skyline Lodge during two summers while I was in high school. The Park was the first National Park in the eastern part of the country, and its establishment meant the relocation of hundreds of families that had lived in the mountains for decades.

Talk with any locals there, and you can hear the resentment felt by those who were made to leave the mountains as challenging as their life may have been there.

The roads, trails, and beautiful roadside walls were built by Civilian Conservation Corp workers during the Great Depression. If you are going to the Park this time of year, go on weekdays if your schedule permits. If you plan to hike check in advance to see if tickets are required on the trails

you’ve chosen.

Enjoying the natural beauty of the Commonwealth reminds us that we must adopt public policies that will ensure that the pleasures we enjoy today can be enjoyed by our children and grandchildren in the future. That sometimes means making laws and regulations to protect our environment and leave us with a healthy and beautiful Virginia.

### Let Us Know Your View

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# County Supervisors Reject State Anti-Trans Policies

Regulatory Town Hall site floods with over 67,000 comments.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors made it clear in its Oct. 25 letter to the Virginia Department of Education and Gov. Glenn Youngkin that it unequivocally rejects the proposed policy changes as described in the department's 2022 Model Policies on the Privacy, Dignity, and Respect for All Students and Parents in Virginia's Public Schools. According to comments in the letter approved by the board on Tues., Oct. 25, by a vote of 9-1, the guidelines do not agree with Fairfax County's commitment to creating an equitable and welcoming environment for all.

"By denying that support and affirmation to transgender students, your model policies put our children at risk," writes Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D) on behalf of the board to the Virginia Department of Education. He emphasizes the county's One Fairfax policy, which ensures equity in decision-making regardless of a resident's race, color, sex, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, income, or where they live.

McKay writes that the policy and its inherent discrimination would have a "chilling effect" on the county's ability to attract companies in the future. "To put it bluntly, discrimination is bad for business." McKay requests that VDOE consider the harm that imposing the model policies would cause.

A transgender student is defined in the 2022 policy as "a public school student whose parent has requested in writing, due to their child's persistent and sincere belief that his or her gender differs with his or her sex, that their child be so identified while at school." Sex refers to biological sex.

The Virginia Regulatory Town Hall website opened for public comment on the model policies on Sept. 26 and will close at 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, October 26.

The supporting website comments had 66,231 comments as of 6:20 a.m. Oct. 26. View and Enter Comments. <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/Comments.cfm?GdocForumID=1953>

The statements in the proposed Virginia Department of Education's "2022 Model Policies on the Privacy, Dignity, and Respect for All Students and Parents in Virginia's Public Schools," take effect if approved. Among the guidelines



FILE PHOTO

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D)

topics are those focusing on student identification, guidance and counseling, use of pronouns, and student records.

For instance, the revised policy dictates that school division personnel "shall refer to each student using only the pronouns appropriate to the sex appearing in the student's official record." According to the proposed policy, there are some exceptions. A student who is 18 or older, an emancipated student under the age of 18, or the student's parent can notify the division in writing to use a different name or pronouns "because of the student's persistent and sincere belief that the student's gender differs from his or her sex."

Before a student receives school counseling services, including gender counseling, parents must be informed and have the opportunity to object. Furthermore, staff members may only use students' pronouns if they match the student's official record for sex. To change a student's name or sex on the official record, a parent or eligible student must submit "a legal document, such as a birth certificate, state- or federal-issued identification, passport, or court order substantiating the student or former student's change of legal name or sex."

According to the Department of Education, the proposed guidance document changes support efforts to "protect and encourage respect for all students."

"Thus, we have a collective responsibility to address topics such as the treatment of transgender students with necessary compassion and respect for all students."

The department claims the 2021 Model Policies "promoted a specific viewpoint aimed at achieving cultural and social transformation in schools. In addition, the department cites that the 2021 Model Policies disregarded the rights of parents and ignored other legal and constitutional principles that significantly impact how schools educate students, including trans-



FILE PHOTO

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield)

gender students." The department issued the proposed 2022 Model Policies "to provide clear, accurate, and useful guidance to Virginia school boards that align with statutory provisions governing the Model Policies. See Code of Virginia, § 22.1-23.3 (the "Act")."

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R) cast the dissenting vote during the Oct. 25 board meeting that addressed the policies. He wrote in an email, "While this Board refuses to weigh in on other important school issues like poor test scores, the achievement gap, our shrinking student population, and opening schools during COVID, they are quick to engage on political issues. This letter was entirely political, bashing the entire policy without including a single recommended change. With the significant mental health issues our students face today, I believe parents as well as the schools should be engaged to help them through these difficult times."

Other Virginia legislative bodies and school divisions are weighing in. On Wed. Sept. 28, the Alexandria City Council sent a letter to VDOE backing their school board's rejection of Youngkin's proposed policies. On Oct. 3, the Richmond City School Board also formally rejected the policies.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

FCPS students protest against policy on Sept. 27.

Fairfax County Public Schools released a statement on the proposed policies following the Oct. 6 board meeting: "Our policies and regulations will continue supporting our transgender and gender-expansive students, staff, and families. Fairfax County School Board Policy 1450 protects students, educators, and other staff from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Fairfax County Public Schools Regulation 2603." The board is committed to the Virginia Human Rights Act, Title IX's prohibition on gender identity discrimination, and the settled law of Grimm v. Gloucester County School Board, 972 F.3d 586 (4th.

Cir. 2020), which requires respect for students' gender identity.

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay said that the Board of Supervisors usually defers school policy to its school board colleagues. However, "The proposed new regulations discriminate against the county's most vulnerable residents, transgender children, and their families and harms them."

"I hope the Governor sees the many thousands of comments opposing these policies and recognizes that what is currently in place from Governor Northam is working. Our FCPS students and families are doing well and there is no problem to solve," said McKay.

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# ART WALK



Artist Rae Carlson works with paint and charcoal.



Rachel Farzan does digital illustrations.



Richard McMurry displays his oil paintings.



Astrid Reeves displays her acrylic, fluid art done without a brush.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

## Acrylics, Oils, Watercolors, Charcoal, Graphics, Photography

The Art Walk on Fairfax City's Main Street was Saturday, Oct. 22.



Russ McIntosh with his visual photo collage of Fairfax City.



Burley Rudacille proudly shows the watercolor owl he painted.



Artist Fritz Treyz displaying his oil paintings.



Padma Prasad holds one of her oil paintings.



Betty Baumgartner with her acrylic and watercolor artwork.



Heather Negley shows her acrylic, fluid art and jewelry she makes out of her leftover paint.



Mike Crampton does graphic design, illustrations and cartoons.



Samuel Fountain III makes chainmail from soda-can tabs and does photography and woodblock printing.

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# Bringing Life to Landfills

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

The word “landfill” instantly conjures up mental images of smelly trash, jumbles of junk and garbage trucks crawling into the dump. Espousing a “Making Trash Bloom” philosophy, Sustainability Matters is out to upgrade this classic landfill image and to transform these dump sites into vibrant habitats that support native insects, birds and other wildlife. Their goal is to replace traditional turf with plants that attract pollinators to an area that otherwise would be an ecologically dead space. Historically, most landfills are covered with non-native turf grasses and are basically wastelands in terms of environmental quality, ecologists contend.

On Oct. 27, Sustainability Matters and Fairfax County officials will hold a ribbon-cutting on a new pollinator habitat project at the county’s I-66 Landfill and Transfer Station on West Ox Road. Volunteers will hand plant seeds on just under an acre and plant almost another acre in the spring. “This is land that cannot be used for anything else, like buildings or growing crops,” says Sari Carp, Sustainability Matters founder and executive director. “And in Fairfax where there is so much development, pollinators, insects and wildlife are in desperate need of habitat so this is a chance to turn something that is essentially a hill of trash into a positive for the environment.”

Over one million people take trash to the I-66 landfill every year, so the project is also “a golden chance to reach non-traditional conservation audiences, like people who never go to an environmental center or wildlife refuge,” says Carp. Another 12 million who drive by will see interpretative signage, she adds.

Eric Forbes agrees. “We see the new meadow as a show piece of nature that will be visible as our residents drop off their recycling and food scraps. Hopefully, visitors will see the meadow as something they can plant in their own yards or neighborhoods.” Forbes is the deputy director for the county’s solid waste management program.

The I-66 landfill project is number three for the organization. On October 16, 50 volunteers hand seeded three plots at the Rappahannock County landfill near Warrenton. The group’s flagship project is at Virginia’s Shenandoah County landfill, started in 2019.

## Why Make Landfills Bloom?

Today’s landfills are engineered facilities built to bury and dispose of residential and commercial solid waste. Sites must meet certain legal design, operation and closure requirements and are regulated in part to protect natural resources from leaking con-

### More Information

<https://sustainabilitymatters.earth>  
<http://bees.gmu.edu>  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/results?q=Landfills>  
<https://pollinator.org>



The pollinator habitat in bloom at the Lorton I-95 landfill.



Some of the beehives maintained by George Mason University at the Lorton I-95 landfill in partnership with Fairfax County.



High school student Richard Malroy choreographed a seed-stomping dance and volunteers joined in the fun.



taminants like heavy metals, toxic chemicals and methane emissions. Sustainability Matters plants on what are called “closed” landfills, sites no longer accepting

trash.

Landfill managers typically cap closed landfills with clay and plastic topped with one to two feet of soil. To stem erosion, most landfills historically have planted grasses like invasive *Lespedeza sericea*.

“Sustainability is all about maintaining our natural resources and helping protect



Jack Monsted (green shirt) led volunteers in planting seeds at the Rappahannock landfill.



Sari Carp, Executive Director of Sustainability Matters, explains her goals.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY





PHOTO BY ELISE TRISSEL FOR SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS

Flowers grow at the Shenandoah County landfill, creating habitat for pollinators. A similar project is sprouting at Fairfax County's I-66 Landfill and Transfer Station on West Ox Road.

## Bringing Life to Landfills

FROM PAGE 10

### What and How

To prepare for planting, managers mow and scalp the site down to bare earth. Sustainability Matters' teams plant seed mixes, some of which have 20 species of native wildflowers and native grasses that thrive in full sun. They prefer perennial plants that can outcompete invasive plants, attract pollinators and bloom throughout the year, plants like bee balm, Virginia wild rye, blue asters and oxeye sunflowers.

Sponsors hope to attract insects like bees and butterflies and birds like grasshopper, field and white-throated sparrows. "If you build it, they will come," argues Rappahannock County native plant vendor and volunteer Janet David, "It can be a goldmine of ecosystem services."

At the Rappahannock site, local students choreographed a seed-stomping dance to press the seeds into the ground and planters romped around to the tune of "Standing in the Sun" by Beyonce.

Flinging and stomping seeds is no guarantee of success so the group will monitor sites, especially during the first phases. Students and others will collect data. "Meadows are hard their first few years," says Carp, "to control invasive plants and get sites to a self-sustaining state."

Native plant meadows do not require the same frequency of mowing as landfill grasses, an advantage that officials applaud as saving energy and taxpayer dollars. Landfill managers may mow the native plant sites at times to discourage trees which cannot survive there long term.

### Longer Term

Carp views the projects as pilots to test seed mixes, site preparation, planting techniques, erosion control and invasive plant man-

agement and hopes to move to scalable models in expanding the projects. "We are trying to find a model that works," she explains. "The question was, what can we plant on trash? And I said, 'Why not native plants?'"

At the Rappahannock landfill, Jack Monsted, an assistant curator at Virginia's state arboretum, summarized, "Without this, it's a wasteland. We can reclaim it, make it more productive and provide ecosystem services."

### I-95 Landfill

Fairfax County's 200-acre, I-95 Landfill in Lorton is home to a honeybee and pollinator habitat project, started in 2017.

The county is converting five acres of turf into native meadow habitat. George Mason University's Honey Bee Initiative Director Germán Perilla supervises 17-to-20 hives there. Managers hope the project will increase honeybee populations which are in decline, increase a stable vegetative layer of perennial wildflowers and reduce runoff into the Occoquan and Potomac Rivers. Officials say the site also provides educational opportunities, increases sustainability and lowers maintenance costs.

Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck has championed this approach: "Along with the leadership of key residents, I have gotten our County to dramatically increase native landscaping and plantings on public and private properties to lessen yard space and increase natural habitats," he offers. "Landfills and open space are also perfect locations to create these nurturing environments. Our County is taking a proactive role in this climate mitigation strategy, continuing to repurpose our landfills and planting native gardens in many locations around the County. However, we need every resident's help to save our pollinators."

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# 'Thar Be Dragons in These Woods'

Volunteer team slays dragons in Laurel Hill Park.

By SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

This is no fictitious Halloween monster tale. There are, or now more correctly were, dragons in our local Lorton park, though not the kind of ancient myth. These recently vanquished monsters are in the plant family; though the argument of exactly which plant family is on-going. Our slain dragons are likely Flying Dragon Citrus Oranges (*Citrus trifoliata*), a cultivar of the Trifoliolate Orange or Hardy Orange (*Poncirus trifoliata*).

The Laurel Hill Park Volunteer Team made their first sighting of a small group of plants growing at the edge of the woods near the Park's Central Green last winter. The plant had not previously been seen in the Lorton or Mason Neck area since 2011, according to Audubon of Northern Virginia's plant survey keeper, Jim Waggener. A Virginia Master Naturalist spotted a second site soon after the first sighting, with larger plants in the northwest section of the park on the edge of the Park's meadow restoration project area.

Recently the team conducted an attack-and-destroy mission, armed with garden pruners and hand saws, to slay the Dragons.

The plant is the most cold hardy of citrus plants, capable of growing here in temperature zone 7, and as far north as zone 6. Dragons can tolerate moderate frost and snow. They grow to the size of a large shrub or small tree of between 13 and 26 feet, producing a white flower with a pink stamen in the Spring, with deciduous compound leaves presented as three green leaflets. The fruit is golf ball size with a downy fuzz. The most notable feature is the large, one-to-two inch green thorns, likely resulting in its common name, Flying Dragon.

Don't let down your guard knowing there are no fire breathing dragons in our woods. This Dragon is described by the Maryland Invasive Species Council as "a very aggressive invader". The plant was a past subject of the Council's



Searching for the plant's seed, or 'Dragon eggs,' to prevent future growth of new plants is something like an Easter egg hunt.



Members of the Laurel Hill Park volunteer team, Lael Dessalegn and Michael Oswald, attack 'Dragons' armed with garden pruners and leather gloves.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



The golf ball sized fruit, filled with seeds and little pulp, is very tart, making it virtually unusable for anything except marmalade.

"Invader of the Month" feature. And like several other invasive, non-native plants, it is still being sold in some commercial nurseries.

It's not being sold as a fruit tree. The fruit, though edible, is extremely bitter; described as a taste combination of a lemon and grapefruit. Used for medicinal purposes in its native Asia, the fruit can be used in making marmalades and jellies, however, it takes many of the small mostly seedy fruit with little pulp, and lots and lots of sug-



Volunteers Dessalegn and Oswald display the fruit of their search which will not have the opportunity to become unwanted plants in the park.

ar.

The plant originally was introduced here for use as a barrier fence plant, due to its density, strong curved thorns and deer resistance. Instead of difficult to contain Dragons, Fairfax County's Invasive Management Area program manager, Patricia Greenberg says,

"I like to recommend the use of native trees and shrubs for hedges and landscaping." Native species help provide more food and cover for a diversity of wildlife including songbirds. There are great examples of native plant alternatives offered on the Plant NoVA Natives website ([https://www.plantnova-](https://www.plantnova-natives.org)



The plant was imported for use as barrier fencing, however, other native plants can be used effectively without aggressive spread.

natives.org). "One such example of a better alternative is American Holly. The Holly is a native evergreen, with shiny spiked leaves and colorful red berries, attractive to birds through the winter. It's valued for privacy, security and beautification plantings and is easier to manage."



## ENTERTAINMENT



A summer like evening on the rooftop with the Summer of George.



The Washington Monument provides the notable backdrop.

# Local Band's First Music Video Filmed on a DC Rooftop

## "Running To You," recorded on the roof overlooking row houses near Capitol Hill.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE CONNECTION

Local rockers called "The Summer of George," had a good summer, but the fall was even better as they released their high energy hit "Running to You," which headlined their first professional music video filmed on a rooftop. Yes, a rooftop over the streets of Washington, D.C.,

reminiscent of The Beatles last performance on a rooftop in London.

"Running to You," is a lively love song about chasing a romantic interest, and the band pulls it off, led by the high energy vocals of Ean Eschenburg. It was filmed and produced by local video company DMV Raps, on the rooftop of the guitarists' flat in DC. The video will be released this Friday, Oct. 28.

The roof was the home of rhythm guitarist Jakob Markham, but the rest of the band lives across the river in Virginia. Singer Eschenburg lives in Burke, Jon Kraft, the lead guitarist and songwriter, lives in Arlington, and drummer Nick Scyoc also lives in Arlington.

Turn the clocks back 53 years, and the rooftop locale came in handy across the pond too. The Beatles rooftop show was an impromptu concert on Jan. 30, 1969, from the rooftop of their Apple Corps headquarters in central London. They played a 45-minute set before the police arrived and

SEE THE SUMMER OF GEORGE  
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1805 Capital One Dr Suite 1100, Tysons

made them turn down the volume. It was the final public performance of their career.

The Arlington Police have been to the Summer of George's shows as well and started with the volume but ended up grooving to the music along with the band. The police even requested a song, band members claimed.

## CALENDAR

### NOW THRU NOV. 15

Fruit Sale Signup. 7-11 p.m. Signup now for Fairfax Lions notices and discounts for Lions Club Fruit Sales in November and December. They sell fresh Florida oranges, mandarins, grapefruit, maple syrup, peanuts to raise funds for charity. Website: <https://www.fairfaxlions.org/citrus-sale-notification/>

### NOW THRU NOV. 17

ESL Class. 7-9 p.m. Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced level English classes. Classes will be in-person or online. Classes will meet twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Books are included in class cost.

### OCT. 1 TO NOV. 5

Workhouse Haunt: Nightmare Harvest. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. This year's Haunt, titled "Nightmare Harvest," will run on weekends from Saturday, Oct. 1 through Saturday, Nov. 5. Friday and Saturday hours are 7-11 p.m. and Sunday hours are 7-10 p.m. The Haunt will also perform on Halloween night, Monday, Oct. 31, from 7-9 p.m. Each Friday and Saturday night from Oct. 7 through Oct. 29, live bands will perform in

the Rizer Pavilion near the Haunt Bar, where guests can purchase snacks and beverages. Tickets are now available for purchase and prices start at \$30 per person. Visit [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org) for schedule and event details.

### OCT. 27-30

"Head Over Heels." At GMU's Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr., Fairfax. George Mason University's School of Theater presents "Head Over Heels," a laugh-out-loud love story of a royal family on a mission to save their kingdom, set to the music and lyrics of The Go-Go's. Dates: Oct 27, 28, 29 at 8 p.m.; Oct. 29-30 at 2 p.m. Cost is \$35/\$15. Visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

### SATURDAY/OCT. 29

The U.S. Army Chorus. 5 p.m. At Westwood Baptist Church, 8200 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. The United States Army Band, a military choral group composed of men and women of the highest musical caliber, sing together in support of military leadership and as an inspiration to the American people. Their free concerts are uplifting, joyful and fun. Their musical repertoire covers a broad range: something for every taste. Visit [westwood-baptist.org](http://westwood-baptist.org)

### SATURDAY/OCT. 29

Swing for Pink Event. 6:30-9 p.m. At Burke Racquet and Swim Club. Play tennis, pickleball, socialize or volunteer. This Breast Cancer Charity Event includes a silent auction, snacks, wine tasting and 50/50 raffle. A local group of individuals is raising support for patients in our local community through partnership with the Inova Schar Cancer Institute. All proceeds benefit breast cancer education, screening and treatment at The Breast Care Institute at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital and the Joseph Viar Jr. and Bonnie Christ Cancer Center at Inova Alexandria Hospital. Visit <https://swingforpinkmtvac.wordpress.com> for details on registration and sponsorship.

### SATURDAY/OCT. 29

"The American Rhapsody." 7:30-9 p.m. At Fairfax High School Auditorium, 3501 Lion Run, Fairfax. Featured is a spoken musical work which tells the story of the nation through the prism of the life and words of America's first president, George Washington. The piece also depicts the nation's agony of slavery. Cost: Senior, \$10; Adult, \$15; Students under 25, free. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxband.org/>

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15



The Holiday Open House will take place on Friday, Nov. 4, 2022 at Gunston Hall Museum.



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**CALENDAR**

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**Let us know about an upcoming event**

[connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar](http://connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar)



## CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 13

### SUNDAY/OCT. 30

The Marshal House Discussion. 3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Darrell Marshall will speak on one of Burke's most historic houses, first built ca 1852 for John and Mary Marshall (probably no relation to our speaker). Email: slawski\_brian@yahoo.com.

### SUNDAY/OCT. 30

Monster Mash. At South Run Rec Center, 7550 Reservation Drive, Springfield. Sport your best Halloween outfit in this spooky, informal, family-friendly event in the beautiful, trailed parkland. Take the little ones to the Spooktacular Tiny Tot Obstacle Course for 2- to 4-year-olds or participate in the Halloween 1-Mile Fun Run for those ages 5 and above. Those looking for more of a challenge can join the Monster Mash 5K Dash for those ages 8 and above. The 1-Mile Fun Run starts at 7:30 a.m. The Monster Mash also begins at 7:30 a.m. The Tin Tot Obstacle Course opens at 8:15 a.m. For more information, call Laurie Strickland at 703-324-9243 or contact her by email at laurie.strickland@fairfaxcounty.gov.

### WEDNESDAY/NOV. 2

Federal Gov't Employee's Health Benefits Talk. 10-11:30 a.m. At Mason District Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Michelle Nesbitt-Johnson, Blue Cross/ Blue Shield, will talk about changes in health benefits programs for Federal government employees and retirees in preparation for the annual "open season" for enrollment changes. Sponsored by NARFE Annandale Chapter 1159. Free. Refreshments. Talk will also be available via Zoom. Contact doujones500@verizon.net by October 29 for link and password.

### WEDNESDAY/NOV. 2

Visiting Filmmakers Series. 4:30-7 p.m. At Johnson Center Cinema at GMU, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. "The Slow Hustle" chronicles the still unsolved death of Baltimore police detective Sean Suiter, shot in the line of duty in 2017. Nominated for a 2022 Emmy, the film explores multiple theories about what happened, including whether Suiter's death was murder or suicide. A live Q&A with the

## HALLOWEEN CALENDAR

### NOW THRU NOV. 5

Workhouse Haunt: Nightmare Harvest. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. This year's Haunt, titled "Nightmare Harvest," will run on weekends from Saturday, Oct. 1 through Saturday, Nov. 5. Friday and Saturday hours are 7-11 p.m. and Sunday hours are 7-10 p.m. The Haunt will also perform on Halloween night, Monday, Oct. 31, from 7-9 p.m. Each Friday and Saturday night from Oct. 7 through Oct. 29, live bands will perform in the Rizer Pavilion near the Haunt Bar, where guests can purchase snacks and beverages. Tickets are now available for purchase and prices start at \$30 per person. Visit [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org) for schedule and event details.

### OCT. 26-27

Walker Nature Center Halloween House and Trick-or-Treat Trail. Advance online sales only for this sell out spectacular. Go to <https://bit.ly/2Oj116j>. Event Times: Fri. Oct. 26, 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m., Sat. Oct. 27, 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.. For ages 3 - Adult. Reston Association

### FRIDAY/OCT. 28

Synetic Theater's Vampire Ball 2022. At 1800 S. Bell Street, Arlington. Synetic Theater's Vampire Ball is DC's hottest Halloween party with everything you need for a spooktacular night. There will be Dracula themed cocktails, dancing, physical theater, spooky Georgian remixes, fun-sized candy bars, and more. The festivities start with a performance of Dracula followed by an indoor/outdoor dance party with all the food and drinks that a ghoul could ask for. Gather all your Basic Witches for a party to wake the dead! Costumes encouraged!

film's producer, Mahrya MacIntire, follows the screening. Members of the public can register here:

<https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1973497/1912539/>

### FRIDAY/NOV. 4

Holiday Open House. 1-5:30 p.m. At Gunston Hall Museum Shop, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. Join the Gunston Hall Museum Shop in kicking off the holiday season at the yearly Holiday Open House Event. Receive 20% off your entire purchase and complimentary gift wrapping all while sipping on light refreshments. ChatuckTreats will be back by popular demand as holiday takeaway cookies. No RSVP required but if you wish to schedule a private or virtual shopping time, reach out to Nicole at [nicole.ryan@gunston-hall.org](mailto:nicole.ryan@gunston-hall.org)

### SATURDAY/NOV. 5

Wicked Sycamore. 7:30 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, W16, McGuireWoods Gallery, Lorton. An all-female trio hailing from the Baltimore/DC area, their sound can be described as contemporary folk with a mischievous edge that is grounded in traditional roots, Americana, and bluegrass. Their original music ranges from fun and light-hearted sing-alongs to deep, introspective tunes for the ages. Visit [workhousearts.org/onstage](http://workhousearts.org/onstage)

### SATURDAY/NOV. 5

Historic Pohick Church First Saturday Tours. 1-3 p.m. At 9301 Richmond Hwy., Lorton. During the Colonial period, Pohick Church was the congregation of many of our country's most prominent families, including the Washingtons, Masons and Fairfaxes. The Historic Pohick Church Docent Guild will give free guided tours of the historic colonial church on the first Saturday of every month between 1:00-3:00 p.m. Visit <http://www.pohick.org>.

### SATURDAY, NOV. 5

Revolutionary War Day. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. Join Colonel Mason and his fellow Virginians as they support the war effort. This family-oriented program has activities for all ages that may be explored in whatever order desired. \$10/adult, \$8/child, 50% off for members

### SATURDAY/OCT 29

Haunted Mini Golf. 5-7 p.m. At Oak Marr Rec Center, 3200 Jermantown Road, Oakton. Come in your favorite costume to Oak Marr Rec Center and play some Haunted Mini Golf. There will be spooky treats, face painting, Halloween games and food trucks with delicious offerings. Call 703-281-6501.

### SATURDAY/OCT. 29

Halloween at The Perch. 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. At Capital One Center in Tysons. Capital One Center is hosting a big Halloween costume party at The Perch - a 2.5 acre sky high gathering place adjacent to Capital One's headquarters in Tysons. Guests are encouraged to bring their furry besties and participate in dog and human costume contests at Starr Hill Biergarten and meet Lucky Dog Animal Rescue's adoptable pups in costumes. Family activities will be held from 12 p.m.-6 p.m. (everything from spooky golf at Perch Putt to face painting, pumpkin painting, inflatable bounce houses, live music, Wegmans-sponsored pumpkin pie eating contests, Halloween arts and crafts and more!). Once the sun sets the ghostly vibes and spooky characters come out! College gameday watch parties and Hocus Pocus will be featured on the big screen, along with a bocce tournament hosted by DC Bocce and a pop-up box office hosted by Capital One Hall. Visit <https://www.capitalonecenter.com/events/halloween-at-the-perch>

### HALLOWEEN OCT. 31

Great Falls Halloween Spooktacular 4 p.m. - 4:45 p.m., Pet Parade; 5:00 p.m. - 7 p.m. Trick-or-Treating, At Great Falls Village Centre, Great Falls.

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

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The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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## Burton Lourie. A Golden Moment



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

And a complete surprise, too, from my wife, Dina, who got up at 6 am on a Saturday morning no less to initiate the ruse. She said she was getting up so early to help a neighbor (Kathy) on a pickup she was making for her business four hours away in Lexington, Virginia. This neighbor is in the buying and selling business - from home, and as a former truckdriver, driving distances to conduct her business was hardly off putting, so the storyline seemed plausible - to me. And I knew nothing more than that as I was led down the garden path, totally clueless.

Later that morning I called Dina on her cell phone to check on their progress. She answered normally enough and said that she was on her way back. I asked her if she could talk (about what Kathy had purchased); she said, "Not really." I replied: "Passenger safely, and I'll see you in a few hours." (I later learned that at the very moment I called, the "Light Golden Retriever" puppy she had gone on this excursion to buy from a breeder whom she had heard about three-months ago while "day-tripping" in Harpers Ferry, was in a kennel in the back of the car and beginning to fuss/bark. If he had, it might have ruined the nearly four-months-in-the-planning surprise.)

Since Dina said she couldn't talk (ostensibly about the fake reason for this trip: Kathy's business), I politely hung up to not disturb their girls-type day. Little did I know. A few hours later, I knew all too well.

About 2 pm, I see/hear Dina's car coming down our driveway. After she parks, I can't exactly see her getting out of her car, but I'm not the least bit concerned/curious. She's an adult; I don't need to watch her get out of a car. Within a few moments I hear her walking toward our front door. A front door whose top half is glass so I could see if she was carrying anything. She turned her back as she backed in through the door and I could sort of see that she looked as if she was carrying something. As she entered the house and faced-me forward, I saw/asked: "Is that a dog?" What is she doing with a dog, I thought to myself. Maybe she's helping Kathy? Kathy has dogs.

She took a few steps towards to her left where I was sitting on our living room couch and says to me: "Here's your new puppy." I was momentarily stunned and soon started laughing (even though we had previously owned two Golden Retrievers; with five cats in the house, a dog was not necessarily our next step.) Stammering, I ask: "Dina, what did you do?" "I got you a puppy." She says: Then she adds: "That's what this whole trip was about. Kathy did me an amazing favor driving us down there. Are you surprised?" Then she carried him over to where I was sitting and placed him in my arms. I laughed again as I cuddled him and looked into his eyes, speechless as I gently rubbed his coat. "Yes. I'm surprised!" I garbled.

It took us a couple of days to name him. For years, when the subject (never a serious discussion) had come up about a new puppy, I had regularly said I liked the name Shemp. But when I started using it for the new puppy, it didn't sound right so I stopped calling him that and began referring to him as my little buddy (which I definitely needed after Twinkle's unexpected passing). The next day, while Dina was online going through dog names, my father-in-law texts me from New York out of the blue (he knew about the puppy; everybody knew): "How about how naming him Burton?" I looked at my cell phone and saw the text, read it and immediately smiled as I looked up and said to Dina: "Your father has just texted the perfect name for the puppy: Burton." (Our two previous Golden Retrievers were "Brandy" and "Bailey," so we were thinking of a name beginning with the letter "B," which Ernest didn't know and yet, he suggested the perfect name). She immediately agreed. As an underling fact, we happen to live in the historic/registered "Isaac Burton House," a 250-year-old-plus converted log cabin, in Burtonsville. After approximately 14 years, since I was diagnosed with cancer, we're back in the dog business. It couldn't have happened at a better time. We needed something to fill the void left by Twinkle's passing.

"And now you know," as Paul Harvey said for so many years, "the rest of the story. Good day!"

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.



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